

## **Times Union: High PFOA levels seen in blood of Hoosick-area residents**

### **2,000 residents above average**

By Brendan J. Lyons

June 4, 2016

Albany

The typical level of a toxic chemical found in the blood samples of more than 2,000 Rensselaer County residents is about 11 times higher than the national average, but well below levels detected in other areas of the nation where the contaminant has also polluted public water supplies, state officials said Friday.

The announcement came as the state Health Department began sending out the results of blood samples that were taken from residents beginning in February in eastern Rensselaer County, including Hoosick Falls and Petersburg. Traces of the chemical, perfluorooctanoic acid or PFOA, were detected in water supplies in those communities at levels far above those recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Most of the tests were performed on residents in and around the village of Hoosick Falls, where PFOA was discovered in the public water system in August 2014 by a village resident, Michael Hickey, who started researching the issue after he observed what he thought was a high rate of cancer and other serious diseases in that area.

State officials said the letters disclosing the level of PFOA in each resident's blood serum were accompanied by information packets describing what PFOA is and what similar blood testing has revealed in other parts of the nation where the substance has been a problem.

As the test results were being distributed, the state Department of Environmental Conservation announced it had reached consent orders with two corporations, Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics and Honeywell International, that will require them to initiate and pay for cleanup of several manufacturing sites in and around Hoosick Falls that were identified as potential sources of the contamination.

Under the agreements, which were signed Thursday but not announced until Friday afternoon, the corporations did not admit any wrongdoing but agreed to pay for costs the state incurs to investigate the contamination, conduct health monitoring and provide clean water in that area.

"These orders send a strong message to industries operating in New York that they have an ethical and legal obligation to protect public health, safety and the environment," said DEC Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos. "We will continue to ensure all communities across the state have access to clean, drinkable water."

Dr. Nathan Graber, director of the Health Department's Center for Environmental

Health, said the agency will continue to take blood samples from residents, and health officials will be available at a village armory for residents seeking additional information on PFOA. Some of the results were also being mailed to residents' physicians if those residents requested it, he said.

Graber and other state officials declined to provide the range of PFOA levels in the blood samples, including the highest level of PFOA detected in any sample. They said they wanted that information to be delivered to residents before it was reported in the news.

"The very important message is that these results can really only tell you about your exposure," Graber said, "and that's very important for them to understand what the risks are for health effects in the future. People are going to be very concerned and they need reliable sources of information. We encourage people to speak with their physicians."

The data being distributed by the state is based on a "geometric mean," so the very highest and lowest samples were thrown out so that they would not skew the results and give a more accurate view of the average level of PFOA found in a person's blood in that area, state officials said.

The geometric mean level is 23.5 parts per billion, which is well above the average level of PFOA — 2.08 parts per billion — found in the blood of most people, officials said.

"We also analyzed these data by gender and age," Graber said. "The age results do show increasing PFOA levels in blood with age, which is probably reflective of longer exposure."

Graber said that without additional elevated exposure to PFOA, such as having it in drinking water, the level of the man-made chemical in a person's system usually decreases to about half in four years, and may drop to levels more in line with the national average in about nine years.

David Engel, an attorney for Healthy Hoosick Water, a grassroots group that formed more than a year ago to urge Hoosick Falls village leaders to take more aggressive action in dealing with the contamination, including warning the public to stop drinking contaminated water, said the organization is "particularly interested in what the range of the numbers are."

"Some people stopped drinking water there a couple year ago, when they became aware of the concerns, and their results are certainly going to be influenced by what behavioral changes they made," Engel said. "The people who have been exposed through the workplace undoubtedly are going to show higher values and we'll have to wait and see what those numbers are."

"It's still unclear why it's taken four months to get these numbers," he said.

The Health Department, meanwhile, has retained Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City to consult and monitor a medical analysis the state will conduct to

determine whether Rensselaer County residents exposed to the chemical have experienced elevated levels of serious diseases or other adverse health effects.

"We've begun that review and we're going to be working with Mount Sinai to review our work and provide input on how we can improve it," Graber said.

Three years ago, a science panel released the results of a multi-year study that examined PFOA exposure and health risks in several Ohio Valley communities, where PFOA, also known as C8, was emitted since the 1950s from a manufacturing plant in Parkersburg, W. Va. The study found probable links between PFOA exposure and high cholesterol, ulcerative colitis, thyroid disease, testicular cancer, kidney cancer and pregnancy-induced hypertension. In some of those communities, blood samples of residents and factory workers showed elevated levels of PFOA at hundreds of parts per billion, and in some cases more than 1,000 parts per billion.

Saint-Gobain operates two plants in Hoosick Falls, including a McCaffrey Street facility the company has owned since 1999. The McCaffrey Street plant is a few hundred yards from the village's water-treatment plant and has been a focus of the contamination.

PFOA has been used since the 1940s to make products such as nonstick coatings and heat-resistant wiring.

## Opinion

### **Hoosick Falls: The hearings Cuomo can't have**

New York Post - 9 hours ago

It's now clear why Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie doesn't want to hold hearings on the Hoosick Falls water crisis: They'd spotlight the Cuomo administration's reckless failure to warn residents about the tainted water for nearly a year and a half.

"We don't want to alarm people" about the water issues, a top state health official, Nathan Graber, told his federal Environmental Protection Agency counterparts last year, according to a Politico report Thursday.

Albany also pooh-poohed EPA guidelines as overly cautious: "There's a margin of safety that's built into the [EPA's] health advisories," a Health Department aide told Politico.

By November, the feds were growing frantic. "We need the state health department to focus on the water supply issues fast," one wrote.

Yet it was only after the Hoosick Falls mess got big press attention in February that Gov. Cuomo finally acted, promising a new water supply and water filters.

Legislative hearings might uncover new facts about how and why Team Cuomo ignored the crisis — but lawmakers evidently fear that would outrage Cuomo.

In February, Heastie & Co. vowed to hold hearings by April on the state's water quality, due to "issues at places like Hoosick Falls and Flint, Mich." Then the speaker reneged, saying hearings aren't "necessary." He's now saying maybe, someday — while the state Senate hasn't even threatened a probe.

As evidence of Team Cuomo's recklessness grows, so does the importance of hearings — and, alas, the pressure to block them.

## **Two people in Hoosick Falls had blood tests showing very high levels of PFOA**

By Lauren Linder

June 5, 2016, 10:28 pm

HOOSICK FALLS, NY (NEWS10) – Many people living in Hoosick Falls are still relying on bottled water. At the same time, they're finally starting to get some answers about PFOA's impact on their health.

"It was kind of a surprise, they actually held up," said Harold Stevens, who received blood test results.

After four months of waiting for answers, Harold and Marion Stevens now know how much PFOA they have in their bloodstreams.

"I said wow, we're, we're up there," said Harold.

Their numbers are pretty high. Test results show Harold has 159 micrograms per liter or parts per billion while Marion has 104.

According to the DOH, the average level of those sampled in Hoosick Falls is 23.5 parts per billion, five times higher than the national average.

"We've got to learn what the effects now are going to be, because I don't know what these numbers represent," said Marion.

The Stevens' said they're now going to go to the doctors to find out what this means for their health in the long run. But until that time, they don't know how to feel about their results.

"We don't know to feel worried or not worried because until we talk and learn more about those results, that's when we're going to be able to know exactly what to feel," said Marion.

On the other hand, they still have strong feelings of disappointment about the local and state governments.

"We feel that we've been deceived, especially when we have seen what Vermont has done in such a short time, and then we have kind of been put on a back burner," said Harold and Marion.

But even after all this time waiting for answers, they're hopeful for the future.

"I'm hoping for a tomorrow. I'm still hoping that there is a new water source that comes into Hoosick Falls. I'm hoping that our governor steps up to the plate to his promises," said Marion.

Now the Stevens' are just two people who have received their results so far. Many others including, their children and grandchildren, still haven't yet.

If you have any concerns about your test results, the Department of Health will be at the Armory to answer your questions on Tuesday at 2 p.m.

### **Hoosick Falls woman receives PFOA blood test results; son still waiting on his results**

By Lauren Linder

June 5, 2016

HOOSICK FALLS, NY (NEWS10) – People in Hoosick Falls are finally learning how much PFOA is in their bloodstream.

Since the PFOA crisis began, many people living in Hoosick Falls have turned to bottled water. As they continue to do so, they're now getting some answers on their test results.

"I've been robbed," said Heather Clifford, who just received her blood test results.

Four months after getting her blood tested for PFOA, Heather Clifford finally received her results.

"Mine came back at 47.6," said Clifford.

Clifford said her PFOA levels are 24 times higher than the average female in the U.S. She said it's a scary fact and doesn't know what it will mean in the long-run.

All the while, her son is still waiting for his results.

"After expecting these results within a few weeks, waiting all of this time to only

have a few of them mailed, it's very frustrating," said Will Clifford.

Will Clifford said it's upsetting that they're not getting many answers.

"We need this information. We need to know what's happening in our own bodies, in our own homes, and we're not getting that," said Will Clifford.

In the meantime, the Cliffords' have lost their trust in the town's water system.

"Little did we know we were actually hurting ourselves more and paying per gallon for metered water," said Heather Clifford.

Heather ended up installing her own filtration system in her home in addition to the town's filtration system.

But after what's happened, she's still having trust issues.

"It feels like a stolen identity you know. If I woke up one morning and found out about this, there's nothing I can do about it. There's no way to quickly fix it and it just wreaks havoc," said Heather Clifford.

Now she's just trying to ingest her results and waiting for her son's.

"I don't think we have the ability to be that naive anymore, and it's not just Hoosick Falls, I think it's everywhere," said Heather Clifford.

The Department of Health will be at the Armory in Hoosick Falls on Tuesday at 2 p.m. to answer any questions people have on their results.

## **PFOA Blood Test Results Has Hoosick Falls Residents Afraid and Confused**

TWC News

By Michael Howard

Sunday, June 5, 2016

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. -- People in Hoosick Falls are finally starting to learn the health impacts of drinking water contaminated with PFOA. Their blood tests were mailed out this week, and many are still trying to make sense of what it all means.

"I try to think in hindsight what could I have done differently," Hoosick Falls resident Heather Clifford said.

Speaking through tears Clifford is now faced with the reality so many of her

Hoosick falls neighbors share, they have the harmful chemical PFOA in their blood.

The single mother of two boys was one of more than 2,000 that will receive a letter from the New York State Department of Health, listing lab results from a February blood test. Clifford's letter lists her PFOA level as 47.6 parts per billion.

"It wasn't very encouraging, so I'm just trying to take it minute by minute right now," she said.

The letter compares the average amount of PFOA in Clifford's blood to samples taken from residents in other communities where the chemical has leached into water sources.

Clifford's results are slightly higher than the third highest national Average in Ohio. The average of 23.5 parts per billion for Hoosick Falls residents is 11 times higher than the general population. A hard reality for her to face.

"I don't know what it means completely, I don't know who to believe," Clifford said.

Out of the thousands of blood samples taken by state health officials, they would not say if the results indicate the potential for a future illness or if a person's current health issue is related to PFOA. Adding to Clifford's stress and questioning why it took so long to find out.

"Conspiracy theories like they're intentionally holding the results, I don't believe that," Clifford said. "I know there's a lot of information to pull together, but it does still make you wonder why four months?"

## **First PFOA blood test results arrive in Hoosick Falls**

By WRGB Staff Sunday, June 5th 2016

HOOSICK FALLS -- Harold and Marion Stevens have lived in Hoosick Falls for 35 years. They were among the group of residents who had their blood drawn back in February on the first day the New York State Department of Health began taking blood from residents to test it for the presence of PFOA. The Department of Health mailed the results on Friday and the couple received their letter on Saturday. "To tell you the truth we really didn't expect it to come; they've been stalling for so long and the fact that it was in the mailbox yesterday was a surprise," Mr. Stevens said.

Harold's number was 159 micrograms per liter; Marion's 104 micrograms per liter. According to the Health Department the 50th percentile number derived from the samples taken from more than 2,000 Hoosick Falls residents is 28.3 micrograms per liter. According to the Centers for Disease Control the 50th percentile number for the United States population is 2.08 micrograms per liter. So the Stevens'

numbers are higher than the average. "It's high, we are in the 95th percentile," Mrs. Stevens said.

The couple now have a lot of questions for their doctor. "How is this impacting me, how is this hurting my health or could it hurt my health," Mr. Stevens said.

According to the Department of Health, older people tend to have higher levels because of a longer period of exposure. There is no treatment to reduce levels, but they will generally decrease by half over a period of 2-4 years.

WNYT

### **For one Hoosick Falls couple, blood tests create more questions than answers**

WNYT Staff

Updated: 06/05/2016 6:24 PM

HOOSICK FALLS – When Harold and Marion Stevens received their blood test results that showed the amount of exposure they've had to the toxic chemical PFOA, their attention was caught right away.

"Wow, this is something else," thought Harold Stevens.

Something else because the Stevens' say the numbers seemed a bit high. Marion tested at 104 parts per billion. Her husband was higher at 159 parts per billion.

"I know it's high," said Harold Stevens. "But what does that high number mean?"

To put those figures in perspective, state officials say the average in Hoosick Falls is 23.5 parts per billion. That's still more than 10 times the sample from the average American.

The Stevens' lived in their home on Wilder Avenue for more than 35 years. They've been drinking the municipal water where the PFOA contamination was discovered.

No one knows exactly how long the man-made chemical that's been linked to cancer and other illnesses has been in the water supply.

The Stevens' are planning a visit with their physician to try to make sense of the numbers and how they could impact their health.

"We both are concerned, said Marion Stevens. "We're going to both be retiring. What's going to be our future medical costs if something develops out of this? We don't know."

Blood testing began back in February. The Stevens' were part of the first groups to be tested and one of the first couples to receive their results.

## **NY Health Department releases some Hoosick Falls blood test results**

By Lindsay Nielsen and Rachel Yonkunas

June 4, 2016, 4:48 pm

ALBANY, N.Y. (NEWS10) – The New York Department of Health (DOH) released some of the Hoosick Falls blood test results with NEWS10 ABC Friday afternoon.

NEWS10 reporters Lindsay Nielsen and Rachel Yonkunas were on a conference call with Jim Malatras the NYS Director of State Operations, Dr. Nathan Graber the Director of Environmental Health at the DOH, and the Director of Public Affairs at the DOH Friday afternoon. It was during this call the state officials shared some blood test results.

When asked why NEWS10 was not allowed to use direct audio or quotes, we were not given any specific reason other than that is how the officials wanted to handle the release of the information. For months, the DOH has refused to talk to NEWS10 on camera about any issues regarding PFOA in Hoosick Falls, and they did the same on Friday.

To date, the DOH has analyzed more than 2,000 blood samples from people living in Hoosick Falls. During the phone call, the DOH said the results are what they expected considering the degree of exposure in the community.

Officials did not release any personal information, but they did explain that older individuals will likely see higher levels, especially those who have worked closely with PFOA.

The DOH tells NEWS10ABC the general population has an average of 2.08 ppb of PFOA in their blood, a number from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The DOH says the 95th percentile have PFOA levels of 5.68 ppb in their blood.

According to the blood results, the average level of those sampled in Hoosick Falls is 23.5 ppb. It's more than five times higher than the national average, but it is still significantly lower than what PFOA experts consider a "health risk."

The health department did not say during the phone call what the highest or lowest levels were. They only stated the average.

Michael Hickey first alerted the village of Hoosick Falls to the PFOA contamination in 2014. He's hopeful the results can help with early diagnosis of the illnesses linked to PFOA.

"In my dad's case, maybe if we knew his number back then, maybe we could have caught his kidney cancer earlier on in the process," he said. "It's something that you hope that this gains."

State officials said some studies do not show health risks associated with higher levels of PFOA in a person's blood. But when Rachel challenged that claim, she was met with silence.

"CDC and ACS and WHO all actually recognize that the studies were done by the C8 Science Panel," she said during the phone call. "Very little research done prior to that. If you know of studies that dispute their research, I would like to hear which studies those are."

No one gave an answer.

People living in Hoosick Falls told NEWS10 they are tired of the state's lack of transparency.

"We're not stupid people," Catherine Dawson said. "We need the information. We need to be able to advocate for our own health care and know what's coming down the pike for us."

When people get their results in the mail, it will include a letter with information that compares their level to those who have been exposed through drinking water and PFOA working environments in other states.

The department said they continue to collect blood samples at the Hoosick Falls Armory. They have also reached out to healthcare providers that will be looking at their patients' results.

Anyone with questions is advised to speak to their healthcare provider.

Jim Plastiras, Dir. of Public Affairs for NYS DOH, released the following statement late Friday evening:

"The NYS Department of Health has completed the analysis of more than 2,000 blood samples of residents in Hoosick Falls. Residents have been mailed a comprehensive packet of information to help them understand their results and have been provided with multiple options for reaching physicians and staff should they have additional questions."

### **Some Hoosick Falls residents yet to receive PFOA blood test results**

WNYT Staff

Created: 06/04/2016 6:13 PM

HOOSICK FALLS -- Representatives from the state health department were ready to go Saturday morning, all set to answer questions from residents who might have gotten their blood test results in the mail.

But no residents showed up.

"There are a couple of thousand results that have to be mailed out," said Hoosick Falls Mayor David Borge. "That'll take a little bit of time. I have not received my results."

Borge says the results are being mailed out in terms of when the sample was taken.

"If you were one of the first people to be sampled, you'd be one of the first people to get the results," he said.

Testing began about four months ago after the toxic chemical PFOA was discovered in the village water supply and in private wells in the surrounding area. PFOA has been linked to many illnesses, including cancer.

"The results would really just be a predictor of how long you've been exposed to PFOA," Borge said.

A state health official said the average person in Hoosick Falls tested 23.5 parts per billion PFOA in their blood. They said that's more than 10 times what the average American has in their blood.

Residents are expected to get a comprehensive packet of information to help them understand their results. Department of Health staff members will be available in the village to provide additional information.

Meanwhile, Borge says he's glad things are progressing and that a second blood test in the future will reflect that even more.

"Now that we have clean water going through the municipal system, that major exposure is no longer there," he said.

### **Assemblyman McLaughlin asking Bharara for DOH, Cuomo investigation into Hoosick Falls**

By WRGB Staff Friday, June 3rd 2016

TROY - Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin has written to US Attorneys calling for an investigation on Governor Cuomo's administration handled the Hoosick Falls water crisis.

The republican lawmaker, citing a Politico article, saying that Cuomo's administration and the NYS DOH 'botched' the handling of the water crisis and did not follow EPA guidelines.

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara and U.S. Attorney Richard Hartunian were addressed in the letter.

"The residents I represent believe that the Cuomo Administration and DOH perpetuated and facilitated the consumption of contaminated village water and demonstrated a pathetic level of accountability and transparency in handling the matter," McLaughlin wrote. "I am asking you to open an in-depth investigation into the state's handling of the Hoosick Falls water crisis because our residents deserve answers and government officials should be held accountable.", said McLaughlin in his letter.

Times Union

### **State says Hoosick companies will pay for water, filtration**

By Rick Karlin, Capitol bureau

June 3, 2016 at 5:05 PM

The Cuomo Administration is out with news of an agreement that holds two companies in Hoosick Falls responsible for the PFOA contamination in the community's water supply. The news comes as blood test results are being sent back to residents from the state Department of Health. The state has been calling for a consent order with two manufacturers with plants in the area, Saint Gobain and Honeywell, for several months.

Here are the details and agreements:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos today announced that the state has executed two Consent Orders ([http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions\\_pdf/stgobainco632016.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions_pdf/stgobainco632016.pdf), and [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions\\_pdf/oakmaterialsco62016.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions_pdf/oakmaterialsco62016.pdf)) that will hold Saint Gobain and Honeywell responsible for the PFOA contamination in the Hoosick Falls area. Under the Consent Orders the State will require the companies to:

- Investigate the source and determine the full scope and extent of contamination at four Honeywell and two St. Gobain plants;
- Investigate feasibility of an alternate water supply which may include a new well field, a surface water supply source, or an interconnection with an existing municipal water supply system, among others;
- Fund the installation and maintenance of temporary and full capacity filtration

systems for the Village municipal water supply;

- Reimburse State for costs incurred for response and investigation into the contamination, and well sampling; and
- Continue to pay for bottled water for Village and Town residents until successful installation of the full capacity filtration system.

In addition the State will rehabilitate Well 3 on the municipal water system to improve effectiveness of the Village's carbon treatment system. The State is also transferring payment to the Village for rebates to residents for past water bills for water that was determined to be unsafe for use.

"The State is taking aggressive action to hold all parties accountable for the costs associated with the full remediation of the contamination in the Hoosick Falls area," DEC Acting Commissioner Seggos said. "These orders send a strong message to industries operating in New York that they have an ethical and legal obligation to protect public health, safety and the environment. We will continue to ensure all communities across the state have access to clean, drinkable water."

#### Funding for Village Water Filtration System

The McCaffrey Street Consent Order memorializes Saint Gobain's commitment to pay for the maintenance of the existing temporary drinking water filtration system on the Village's municipal water supply which is currently filtering PFOA out of the drinking water. Saint Gobain will be required to pay for all costs associated with the design, installation and operation of a full capacity water treatment system, and all additional incidental operation and maintenance costs of the municipal water system caused by the installation of the full capacity system. Honeywell and Saint Gobain will continue to provide bottled water to residents of the Village until the full capacity system is in place and to Town of Hoosick residents until their point of entry treatment (POET) systems installed for private drinking water wells are cleared for all uses.

The State will also rehabilitate Well 3 of the municipal supply system as an interim remedial measure to attempt to improve the effectiveness of the Village's carbon treatment system and will seek to recover any cost associated with the rehabilitation of Well 3 from the responsible parties. The Consent Order also requires Honeywell and Saint Gobain to negotiate with the Village with respect to the Village's past costs. As part of this component, Honeywell and Saint Gobain have indicated to the State that they will make a comprehensive offer to reimburse the Village for costs associated with the Village's response, and that their offer will provide reimbursement for rebates provided to Village Municipal Water Supply users.

#### Alternate Water Supply

As part of the State Superfund program's required Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study, Honeywell and Saint Gobain will conduct an evaluation of the

feasibility of an alternate water supply for the Village of Hoosick Falls, including, but not limited to a new well field, a surface water supply source, an interconnection with an existing municipal water supply system, continuing the treatment provided, or any combination of those alternatives.

Following the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study, the State will issue a Record of Decision that will establish a comprehensive remedy to clean-up the Hoosick Falls area and to continue to provide long term safe drinking water to the residents of the Village and Town. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the selected remedy before it is finalized.

#### Water Bill Rebates to Residents

To address concerns from Village of Hoosick Falls residents regarding their water bills, the State is transferring funds to the Village to provide rebates for past water bills for water that was determined to be unsafe for use and for water that was used for flushing the Village's water system during the installation of the temporary treatment system that was recently completed. The State will seek to recover this cost from the responsible parties.

#### Reimburse State for Past Costs

Honeywell and Saint Gobain also agreed to pay for the State's costs of the ongoing response and investigation into the contamination, including the sampling of private water wells in the Town and Village, sampling of the Hoosic River and the bus garage on River Road, sampling of soils, the State's preliminary efforts to evaluate alternative water supplies, and the costs associated with developing, overseeing, administering and enforcing the Orders. Additionally, under a separate Order, Honeywell will commence work to determine possible contamination at several potential disposal sites, and will be responsible for paying all the State's costs in overseeing implementation of that Order.

#### State Actions to Date

To date, the State has undertaken the following actions to help residents in the Village of Hoosick Falls and Town of Hoosick to secure clean water:

- Tested more than 1,000 private wells throughout the Hoosick Falls area and testing is ongoing;
- Installed 765 POET Systems on private water systems and cleared 652 systems for all uses;
- Initiated a confidential PFOA biomonitoring project for more than 2,000 residents of the Hoosick Falls area to measure PFOA levels in blood to provide information to residents on exposure;
- Conducted regular informational sessions at the Armory in the Village of Hoosick Falls every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday beginning in March to

meet with residents and allow them to sign up for well testing and for the biomonitoring project. The State also established a hotline to keep the public informed: 1-800-801-8092;

- Issued emergency regulations to first classify PFOA and then add PFOS and several associated chemicals as hazardous substances to provide the State with the legal authority to pursue State Superfund designation and cleanup of the site using State Superfund resources;
- Urged EPA to take vigorous action on the federal level to regulate PFOA and to initiate an evaluation of the addition of the Hoosick Falls Saint Gobain – McCaffrey Street site to the Superfund National Priorities List;
- Achieved significant progress in its efforts to identify alternate drinking water sources, including groundwater, surface water and connection to existing water supplies and has identified the first phase of potential groundwater locations; and
- Commenced sampling of certain gardens, residential soil and select surface waters as part of the State's Superfund investigation.

WAMC

### **DEC Announces Consent Order To Hold Companies Responsible For Hoosick Falls PFOA Contamination**

By Lucas Willard

Jun 4, 2016

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has secured an agreement that holds companies Saint-Gobain and Honeywell responsible for the PFOA contamination in Hoosick Falls and surrounding area.

Under consent orders the state will require the companies to investigate the source and extent of the chemical contamination and the feasibility of an alternative water supply.

The state is ordering the companies to fund the installation of water filtration systems, continue to pay for bottled water for village and town residents, and reimburse costs incurred by the state in its response, including water sampling.

In a prepared statement, Hoosick Falls mayor David Borge said the village is “actively pursuing the agreement in order to ensure local taxpayers do not bear the costs of a situation they did not create.”

## **DEC holds St. Gobain, Honeywell responsible for Hoosick Falls PFOA contamination**

By Joe Gullo

June 3, 2016, 9:13 pm

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. (NEWS10) – The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation secures agreement that holds Saint Gobain and Honeywell responsible for PFOA contamination in Hoosick Falls.

According to the DEC, the announcement means the companies will have to pay for the village water system and will have to reimburse the state for costs incurred.

“The State is taking aggressive action to hold all parties accountable for the costs associated with the full remediation of the contamination in the Hoosick Falls area,” DEC Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos said. “These orders send a strong message to industries operating in New York that they have an ethical and legal obligation to protect public health, safety and the environment. We will continue to ensure all communities across the state have access to clean, drinkable water.”

Under the agreement the State will require companies to:

- Investigate the source and determine the full scope and extent of contamination at four Honeywell and two St. Gobain plants;
- Investigate feasibility of an alternate water supply which may include a new well field, a surface water supply source, or an interconnection with an existing municipal water supply system, among others;
- Fund the installation and maintenance of temporary and full capacity filtration systems for the Village municipal water supply;
- Reimburse State for costs incurred for response and investigation into the contamination, and well sampling; and
- Continue to pay for bottled water for Village and Town residents until successful installation of the full capacity filtration system.

Times Union

**PFOA test results: 'At first it took my breath away'**

**Residents start to get PFOA test results by mail on Saturday**

By Kenneth C. Crowe II

Updated 8:43 pm, Saturday, June 4, 2016

HOOSICK FALLS — PFOA blood test results began trickling in to residents by mail Saturday — and the above-average numbers started raising concerns.

Village resident Heather Clifford's results came in at 47.6 parts per billion, more than twice the village geometric mean average (a measure that removes the low and the high) of 23.5 ppb released by the state Friday.

"At first, it took my breath away," Clifford said, describing her reaction to the state Department of Health's letter and pamphlet. Clifford immediately began researching cancer risks.

"I'm hopeful because my exposure has been only for eight years," Clifford said.

PFOA, the shorthand for perfluorooctanoic acid, is considered to be carcinogenic. It's a chemical compound used to manufacture non-stick surfaces such as Teflon and in other processes.

[Click here for the history of the Hoosick Falls water crisis](#)

The average reading in Hoosick Falls at 23.5 parts per billion is more than 11 times higher than the average level of 2.08 found in most people.

PFOA contamination has been found in the public and private water systems in Hoosick Falls and the towns of Hoosick and Petersburg.

Water contamination has been traced to the Taconic plant in Petersburg and the Saint-Gobain facilities in Hoosick Falls. Both locations have been declared state Superfund sites. Wells are being tested and filters installed.

"Clean water should be a given," Clifford said about the village's water system.

Resident Harold Stevens has a PFOA count of 159 after living in the village for 36 years.

"I've got a lot of PFOA in my blood," Stevens said. "There's nothing I can do."

Stevens said he will have to rely on his doctors.

The notifications that arrived Saturday were only a handful of the more than 2,000 residents in Rensselaer County who have been tested for PFOA contamination. Clifford said her results arrived, but her teenage son's did not. They were tested on Feb. 13.

Hoosick Falls Mayor David Borge said most results are expected to arrive Monday and Tuesday. He said he has not received his results.

## **Average Hoosick Falls resident has ten times more PFOA in blood than average American**

Asa Stackel

WRGB

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The results are in the mail for the more than 2000 people who had their blood tested for PFOA in Hoosick Falls. On Friday, a state health official gave us a small overview of those results.

The average test came back at 23.5 parts per billion PFOA. That official says that's more than ten times the average American's level of 2.08 ppb. The 95th percentile of Americans hit the 5.68 ppb level.

The official said older people seem to have higher levels of PFOA because of longer exposure. He says every two to four years your PFOA level should be cut in half if you stop consuming contaminated water.

So what does that mean? The state health official says there's just not enough research to say.

The state department of health will be in Hoosick Falls Saturday to answer questions or concerns residents may have about those blood test results. They'll have representatives at the armory from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The school district says any student, parent or guardian who has questions will find support from its nurses and school physician. The department has briefed local doctors to deal with worried patients.

We contacted the health department and the governor's office for comment. The two high ranking officials told us we could only identify them as a state official and a health official. But after our 5 o'clock piece aired, they called us back and told us we could identify them.

We were talking to Jim Malatras, the governor's state director of operations, and Dr. Nathan Graber from the health Department.

We asked those two officials their thoughts on hundreds of pages of documents we obtained from the EPA. Emails that showed the EPA seemingly frustrated with the health department's handling of the PFOA crisis.

In November, Region Two EPA director Judith Enck wrote in an email to staff.

"Bottom line: the town of Hoosick Falls has known about this contamination in

their water supply for over a year. We need the state health department to focus on the water supply issues fast."

She went on to say:

"State health department seems to be relying on negotiations between the mayor and the company. There is a clear need for regulatory oversight by either the state or EPA or both."

That same day, Nidal Azzam from the EPA wrote, "Apparently DOH does not want to take the lead, although I have tried to push them into that path about three weeks ago."

Malatras admitted the health department has known about PFOA since 2014. He says they were in the lead and anything less is a false characterization.

The DEC, announced an agreement today, that holds Saint Gobain and Honeywell responsible for the PFOA contamination. Among the agreement, the companies will investigate the contamination, pay for the village water system and reimburse the state for the costs. The DEC says village residents will receive rebates for the water bills from the state.

After Politico first reported on those emails, Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin asked US Attorneys, Preet Bharara and Richard Hartunian to look into the water crisis. He sent a letter, Friday, calling for an investigation into how the Cuomo administration and the health department, "botched" the handling of the Hoosick Falls water crisis.

We have reached out to ask if the two attorneys have received McLaughlin's letter and if they've decided what their response. We've received no response yet.

## **DOH releases PFOA information**

By WRGB Staff Friday, June 3rd 2016

CBS6 received information from the NYS DOH, as residents of Hoosick Falls wait to receive blood test results detailing their p-f-o-a exposure.

The DOH tells us samples taken in Hoosick Falls show an average contamination level of 23.5 micrograms per liter.

According to the CDC the general population in a community not dealing with the crisis shows a median contamination level of just 2.08 micrograms per liter.

This new information comes amid more breaking news from the state...

State DEC officials tell us they have reached an agreement to formally hold Saint Gobain and Honeywell, two manufacturing plants, responsible for the PFOA contamination in Hoosick Falls.

The agreement will require the companies to investigate the contamination and look into supplying the town with an alternative water source.

The state gave us some information on what those residents can expect -- and what the results mean...

These tests are meant to give an indication of PFOA exposure over time. According to Laurel Schaider, a Massachusetts research scientist we spoke with, nearly all Americans have traces of the chemical in their bodies.

Even when there is no drinking water contamination, we can be exposed through food, food packaging, and household products.

A PFOA study conducted in DuPont, Ohio found there are six health issues with a probable link to the chemical - testicular and kidney cancer, thyroid disease, ulcerative colitis, pregnancy induced hypertension, and high cholesterol.

According to a test of two thousand Americans done by the centers for disease control and prevention, 2.08 micrograms per liter is considered the median blood concentration of PFOA.

But Schaider says it's important to keep in mind that these kinds of benchmarks don't necessarily provide an indication of health effects.

Schaider says PFOA has a half-life in the human body of three years, which means it would take three years to rid yourself of just half of the amount in your body.

She also says there is no real way to help the body eliminate PFOA more quickly than it would naturally on its own.

We have reached out members of the C8 panel about these numbers to find out more about what they mean in terms of health risks.

## **Study finds Hoosick Falls area residents have elevated PFOA levels in blood**

### **Testing results from Hoosick Falls area residents**

By Edward Damon

[berkshireeagle.com](http://berkshireeagle.com)

Posted: 06/03/2016 10:20:57 PM EDT

HOOSICK FALLS, NY >> Results from a study that found area residents have elevated PFOA levels have been mailed to its participants.

The study found residents in the Hoosick Falls area had an average of 23.5 micrograms per liter of PFOA in their blood, according to the New York Department of Health (DOH). That's up to 10 times higher than the average American — most people have between 2 and 5 micrograms per liter of PFOA in their blood, according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The first results from the biomonitoring study, which aimed to measure residents' exposure to the potentially harmful chemical, were mailed on Thursday to Friday.

A fact sheet included with the results states "the result only provides exposure information" and "comparison to people living elsewhere."

"Because scientists and public health experts are still learning about PFOA and human health, the blood testing result does not indicate if a person's current illness is due to PFOA, or if a person will experience illness in the future due to PFOA," the DOH fact sheet states.

Residents will be encouraged to speak with their physician about potential health effects, according to Nathan Graber, director of the Center for Environmental Health at DOH.

Graber told the Banner that, in general, the results showing higher PFOA levels among participants correlate with higher ages, reflective of higher exposure in the past.

Graber said DOH staff are reviewing data from surveys completed by residents. Additional blood draw clinics are slated for June 18 and 28.

Graber said representatives from his agency will continue holding informational sessions at the Hoosick Armory, 80 Church St. They will be there Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Information on the study is available here:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/hoosick>.

It's been four months since DOH launched the biomonitoring study for PFOA, or perfluorooctanoic acid, in blood. Some residents from nearby Petersburg, where PFOA also turned up in wells and a municipal water supply, also participated, according to Graber.

The man-made chemical was used to make Teflon for decades. Saint-Gobain and Honeywell International are responsible for the contamination, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation, because both companies are successors of past manufacturing facilities.

PFOA has been under increased scrutiny and the federal EPA only recently

issued a health advisory level. Its use was widespread across the country. Manufacturers 3M and Dupont are facing class action suits alleging they knew about the harmful health affects decades ago.

Graber said results will come in a mailed packet with a letter from DOH, information about the program and other resources. One sheet will include a table showing residents their result and for comparison, the average levels for the general public and residents of other communities across the country.

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